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ABSTRACT

Designed to help family home care providers address the needs of children at various developmental stages, this manual contains practical suggestions for encouraging and evaluating children's physical development. The manual is divided into four sections focusing respectively on infants, toddlers, preschool children, and school-aged children. Each section contains: (1) a brief summary of the physical development appropriate for the age level discussed in the section; (2) suggestions for activities to help caregivers evaluate each child's developmental level; (3) questions to help caregivers evaluate their home's potential as an environment for fostering physical development; (4) a variety of developmentally appropriate activity ideas; and (5) an activity evaluation form. Ordering information is also provided for a free newsletter series, "Family Day Care Connections," and the "In-Home Daycare" video which was designed to accompany this manual. (MM)

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Helping
Children
Develop Physically

Given the right environment and motivation, physical development in children is mostly a matter of maturation.

Let's look at that statement more carefully.

What is meant by the phrase "the right environment and motivation?"

As children grow older, they progress in their development by learning to master tasks that are increasingly difficult. To do this they need different surroundings and new things to motivate them.

The purpose of this manual is to help you evaluate your family home day care environment to better insure opportunities for the physical growth and development of the children in your care. These are the age level sections . . .

1 **Infants**

2 **Toddlers**

3 **Preschool Children**

4 **School-Age Children**

At each age level of this manual, you will find . . .

- a brief summary of the physical development appropriate for that age;
- activities to help you evaluate the developmental level of the children you care for;
- questions to help you evaluate your home's potential as an environment for fostering physical development;
- a variety of appropriate physical development activities you may want to try with the children you care for; and
- an evaluation form to help you decide which activities are most successful.

This manual was prepared by . . .

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A video, "In-Home Daycare," . . .

is available to accompany this manual. Copies may be borrowed or purchased from the Cooperative Extension Service, South Dakota State University, Brookings. Contact your local Extension home economist for details.

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1

Physical Development of
Infants

During their entire life span, people never grow and change as rapidly as they do as an infant, the first year of life. The newborn starts out, on average, around 19" in length and 8 pounds in weight. He performs mostly involuntary, random, large muscle movements. Most of her first movements are reflexive.

The infant's physical growth will follow two main patterns -- from the top down and from the center out. First, the infant gains control of her head. Soon she is able to lift up as she gains strength in her shoulder muscles.
As his trunk muscles develop, the infant will learn to roll from side to side. An infant learns to sit, then to crawl, and finally, toward the end of his first year, he learns to walk alone.

Although all infants will follow these general growth patterns, they will do so at different rates. It's normal for one infant to sit by five months while another infant may be seven months before gaining enough back control to sit alone.

As a caregiver, you can provide many opportunities for the infant to use muscles and to practice new skills. Infant constraints such as infant seats, walkers, and baby swings can be helpful for keeping the infant safe and comfortable. Do be sure, however, that the infant gets large amounts of time to lay flat and freely move around.

Observe the Infants in Your Care

At what stage of physical development are the different infants in your care?

How far downward has her muscle control moved?

Can he lift their head and shoulders off the floor?

Can she roll over from her stomach to her back?

Will he reach out to try to grasp a small rattle?

If the infant can grasp a small toy, can he let go?

Over the next few days, take time to make notes to yourself each time you see an infant demonstrate a physical skill. Once you have carefully observed each infant, compare your observations with the chart below. You should be able to use the chart to know what area of development to expect next from the infant. More importantly, careful observation of the infant's physical development will help you be more effective as you care for the infant at her present level.

Don't push the infant to move to the next skill level. Learning and growth will come from the repeated practicing of the current skills.

Remember, the ages are only a general guideline. Each infant will develop at his own rate.

Where do the infants in your care spend their time during a typical day?

	Held in lap	High chair	Play pen	Crib	Infant seat	Stroller	Walker	On foot
time in								
time out								
time in								
time out								
time in								
time out								
time in								
time out								
TOTALS	C	C	C	C	C	C	C/F	F

Look at your totals. How much of the day does the infant in your care spend confined to a set area such as a crib? How much time is the infant down and free to move about?

The older the infant the more time he needs to be in free-moving areas that allow him to move muscles and learn to control body movements.

Get in Touch with Your Infants' Schedules

For two to three days in a row, take time to chart the schedules of the infants in your care. What time did they eat? What time did they fall asleep? How long were their naps? Were they ever alert and playful? What time of day was it? For how long?

Example: Monday

8:05-8:20	morning bottle
8:20-10:15	slept
10:15-10:30	laid on floor, just looked around
10:31-10:50	drank second bottle
10:50-12:30	laid on blanket, played contently with small toys
12:30	dozed off to sleep
12:30-3:30	slept
3:30-3:50	drank third bottle
3:50-4:00	sat in baby swing
4:00-4:10	very fussy!
4:10-5:00	went for a walk; quietly looked around
5:00	left for the day

After a few days of charting, look at the different schedules. Does there seem to be a pattern forming? Do the infants tend to sleep about the same time each day? With patience, you can slowly help the infants develop fairly consistent schedules that meet their unique needs, as well as the needs of your family day care home.

Evaluate Your Home

If you care for a mobile infant, it's important to evaluate your home from the infant's perspective. The world really can look different depending how and from where you look at it. Crawl around in the area where an infant may travel. While down on the floor, look around you.

What do you see from each angle?

Try laying in the same location where the infant spends a great deal of time each day. What do the pictures on the wall look like from that angle?

Is there enough stimulation for the baby?

Are objects bright and colorful? Keep in mind that the infant's vision is somewhat nearsighted. Objects too far away will not be easily viewed by the infant.

While down on the floor, what items can you find that may be potentially harmful to the infant? Are there any extension cords to pull or chew, small objects to choke on, sharp edges to fall against, or items easy for an infant to pull over on top of himself?

List items that need to be changed:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Take time to adjust your home to make it as safe as possible for infants to freely explore.

Try These Physical Development Activities with Infants

Tie a bright colored pom pom from a string. Hang this above the infant's arms or legs. Encourage her to bat at the pom pom with her arms or to kick it with her feet.

Attatch large bells to a band. Place the band on the infant's arm or leg. The infant will be encouraged to move the limb to make the bells ring. (Make sure the bells you use are too large for the infant to swallow.)

Use a large pillow, ball, or blow up toy. Place the infant's stomach on the object and roll him slowly back and forth. Allow the infant to reach out with his arms and legs to try to catch himself. (Keep a careful hold on the infant at all times!)

Take the infant for a walk. Encourage her to look around at objects in her environment. Hold her up with her head on your shoulder or facing away from you. Walk around the room talking about the things you see. Change positions from time to time so she has to turn and lift her head in different directions.

Use a colored cloth over a flashlight. Attach the cloth to the flashlight so it still shines a soft light. Move the light slowly from side to side so the infant has to turn his head to watch it move. See if he can follow a full 180 degree angle.

Use a rattle or other small toy that makes a noise when squeezed. Make a noise off to the side of the infant and encourage her to turn her head to locate the source of the new noise.

Tie bright-colored ribbon to the infant's wrist or ankle. As he moves, call the ribbon to his attention. Encourage the infant to try to make the ribbon move up and down or back and forth. You also may want to tie a ribbon around your wrist so you can model the movement for the infant.

Use big pillows or pads for the infant to crawl over and around. Young infants just learning to sit can use the pillow or pad for back support as they explore.

Make soft blocks by covering large pieces of sponge with fabric. The infant can try to stack these or just throw them.

Cut a large hole in the lid of a large plastic pail. Cut sponges into different shapes. The infant can place the shapes into the pail through the hole. (Be sure the pieces are too large to be swallowed.)

Evaluate the Activities

List the new activities you tried with the infants in your care to enhance their physical development.

Activity	How did the infant react?	Changes you would make if you did the activity again
Pom poms		
Large balls		
Pillow/balls		
Infant walk		
Flashlight		
Rattles/noise		
Colored ribbon		
Big pillows		
Soft sponge blocks		
Plastic pail and sponge game		

2 Physical Development of Toddlers

By the end of their first year, most infants begin to walk alone and become toddlers.

As a toddler learns to control his own body movements, he will need a lot of open space where he can practice running, jumping, and climbing. A toddler may have difficulty stopping and turning on command. He may even walk right into a table or a wall.

Once a toddler feels more secure in controlling her body movements, she will attempt control of other objects as well. A toddler likes to push and pull big objects. She enjoys pushing her own strollers and throwing large balls back and forth.

A toddler is working to define his own body as it relates to space. You may find him sitting inside a small box, inside your toy shelf, or under a chair.

A toddler is gaining enough fine motor control to hold a fat crayon and make large scribbles on paper. She has enough eye/hand coordination to be successful at putting together simple puzzles, connecting snap toys, and stacking large blocks. An older toddler will begin to control a blunt scissor, although many of his efforts at cutting still will be quite awkward.

Your role as a provider is important. You will want to provide many opportunities for the toddlers in your care to develop their new physical skills.

Observe the Toddlers in Your Care

Each toddlers's rate of physicsal growth and development is unique. One toddler may acquire a new skill months before another child of the same age does. Yet, both children may be developing normally. One area of physical development where this is particularly true involves growth and development required for successful toilet training.

Use the following checklist to help you determine is a toddler in your care is ready to begin toilet training:

Yes	No	Diapers stay dry for long periods at a time. It is essential that the child's muscles and bladder have developed enough to give the child the necessary physical control.
Yes	No	The child can walk well.
Yes	No	The child can back up into a seated position.
Yes	No	The child can remove loose clothing unassisted.
Yes	No	The child can sense an "urge to go." He/she may stop activity, hold him/herself, or verbalize this urge.
Yes	No	The child shows a positive interest in the toileting process.

If most of your answers are "yes," then the toddler may be ready to attempt toilet training. If your first attempts seem to fail, don't get discouraged. Wait for a awhile, and try again when the child is older and more ready.

Be sure to use a lot of praise instead of punishment or negative reinforcement.

Assess the Physical Abilities of Toddlers in Your Care

Small Muscle Development	Manages skillfully	Can with effort	Will not try
Holds a fat pencil or crayon in hand			
Makes large random scribbles using the whole arm			
Makes controlled scribbles			
Buttons large buttons			
Finishes zipping a zipper if started by an adult			
Snaps together large snaps			
Holds a blunt scissor correctly			
Makes a few simple cuts in stiff paper			
Stacks two to four small blocks			
Drinks from a small glass			
Puts large pegs into large-holed peg board			
Connects together two large snap blocks			
Large Muscle Development:			
Walks alone			
Runs			
Hops with both feet together			
Can jump off of a low block			
Can climb up two to three steps			
Uses upper arms to pull self onto a couch or chair			
Can sit from a standing position			
Can stand from a seated position			
Runs and stops on command			
Runs and turns on command			
Can walk backwards			
Can walk along a wide board laid flat on the ground			

Evaluate Your Home

Yes	No	Are all outlets covered?
Yes	No	Are all phone and curtain cords tied up?
Yes	No	Are stools and chairs moved away from cupboards, counters and tables? (This is important if you have an active climber.)
Yes	No	Are stairways closed off with either a door or a gate?
Yes	No	Are rugs secured so a toddler can't slip on them?
Yes	No	Is there any furniture with sharp corners and edges? (This will need to be removed or padded for safety of the toddlers.)
Yes	No	Are breakable objects such as glass vases and knickknacks put out of the toddler's reach? A toddler could break one and get cut on the broken pieces.
Yes	No	Are old broken balloon scraps laying around? (These can be dangerous if swallowed by a toddler.)
Yes	No	Are there any lose cords on the floor? (Use tape to secure them down to the floor.)
Yes	No	Do you have a large area where a toddler can run freely?
Yes	No	Are there any small spaces okay for a toddler to crawl into?
Yes	No	Are doors removed or locked on unused appliances and furniture?
Yes	No	Are there any large plastic bags within the toddlers' reach? (Toddlers tend to put them over their heads and may suffocate.)
Yes	No	Are all medicines up and out of the toddlers' reach? (Be sure to check diaper bags and purses.)
Yes	No	Is there an area with appropriate equipment that allows toddlers to safely climb and jump?

Toys for Toddlers

The following toys are developmentally appropriate for toddlers. Look through your equipment and check those items you have in your home. Do you have enough toys for the number of toddlers that you care for? Toddlers are not good at sharing. You may need more than one of the popular items.

Gross Motor Toys

____ Push toys (popcorn poppers, large vehicles, wagons)
____ Pull toys
____ Small non-pedal riding toys
____ Large balls
____ Big baskets
____ Pounding toys
____ Plastic bowling sets
____ Big blocks (milk cartons covered)
____ Small climbing gym
____ Large boxes
____ Large, well sanded boards
____ Small potty chair
____ Sturdy child size chairs and tables
____ Large stuffed animals and dolls
____ Toy shopping carts
____ Old pots, pans, and large spoons
____ Bean Bags
____ Soft mats
____ Small blankets
____ Large buckets with handles
____ Sand box
____ Large tubs
____ Small card tables
____ Plastic dishes and containers
____ Old dress up clothes with large buttons or snaps

Fine Motor Toys

____ Stacking rings
____ Bristle blocks
____ Four piece puzzles
____ Large snap together blocks
____ Large pegs and peg boards
____ Large beads and strings
____ Small stacking blocks
____ Blunt scissors
____ Fat crayons
____ Large washable markers
____ Large sheets of paper
____ Large paint brushes
____ Large plastic animals
____ Play people
____ Medium to large toy cars, boats, other vehicles
____ Busy boxes

Try These Physical Development Activities with Toddlers

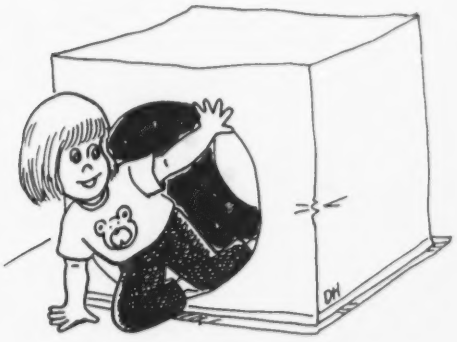
Make collages. Check your cupboards for objects that could enhance eye/hand coordination as toddlers use the items to create different art projects.

Large pasta
Cereal with holes
Marshmallows
Raisins
Cotton balls
Yarn
Plastic packing peanuts
Fabric scraps
Foil, wax paper
Colored paper scraps
Leaves from trees and plants (non-poison only)
Scotch tape
Flour and water paste
Cut-up straws (too large to be swallowed)
Paper

Make sound boxes for the toddler to shake. Use small milk cartons or small plastic container from margarine or yogurt. Fill each container with different items. (Make sure items are too large for a toddler to swallow or use edible items.) Completely cover the container with bright contact paper. This will help to seal in the items. Encourage toddlers to shake the boxes hard. They can shake them high above their heads and then down low. This activity should help in the development of arm muscles.

Make oatmeal drums. Give each toddler an empty oatmeal box. Have them color the outsides with markers or paper. Use contact paper to hold the lids on. Tie a long string through each box to give it a handle. Provide two drum sticks for each toddler by covering big wooden spoons. Encourage the toddlers to swing out both arms as they beat their drums.

Make a string guitar. Use a large plastic meat tray. Wrap several large rubber bands around the tray. Encourage the children to use one or two fingers to pluck at the rubber bands to make a pretty sound.



Build a homemade gym. Start with some sturdy boxes. Then sand and paint some flat boards of different lengths. Use wide tape to fasten the boards securely to the boxes. Keep your structures low to the ground for safety. Toddlers will enjoy a bridge to crawl over and under. Cut two large round holes through a large box for the toddlers to crawl through. Use masking tape to mark x's on the floor. The toddlers can step or hop between them.

Make box vehicles. To make a train, connect three or four boxes together with a strong rope. Use paper towel holders for the smoke stack. Draw on wheels or glue on round circles of stiff cardboard. To make a race car, cut out a medium size box to leave enough bottom for a control panel. Cut a round steering wheel from stiff cardboard and connect it to the control panel with a large metal fastener. Glue on paper plates to look like wheels.

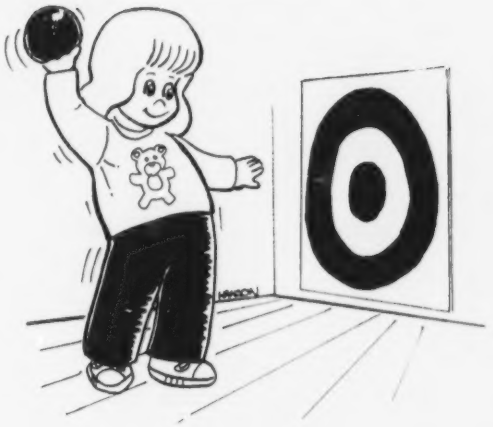
Climbing in and out of boxes helps toddlers gain better control of their muscles and define their body size in relation to other objects.

Set up a toddler free art area. Ask local offices for old computer paper that has been printed on one side only. The toddlers can use the back side for hours of creative scribbling. Use a low shelf or cardboard storage box to store the paper along with blunt scissors, fat crayons, and large washable markers. Keep these art supplies handy and encourage the toddlers to take them to the table and draw. You also could group together in small plastic containers several collage items the toddlers could use to glue onto paper.

Toddlers love water play. Locate a washable floor in your home. Give the toddlers large paint brushes and small plastic pails with handles. Fill the pails part way full of water. The toddler will develop leg strength and upper arm strength as they use large gross movements to "paint" the floor.

Fill dish pans half full of water, then give the children different sizes of plastic containers. Encourage the children to pour the water back and forth between the containers. This activity will aid arm strength and will also help the child gain eye/hand coordination needed later on when they will want to pour themselves a glass of juice or milk.

Make weighted blocks. Start by collecting different sizes of milk cartons, oatmeal boxes, salt containers, and other boxes. Fill the containers with different amounts of clean sand. Tape the lids down tightly and cover with bright contact paper. Handling the blocks will help the toddlers develop arm and leg strength.



Stack egg cartons. Save empty egg cartons. Toddlers can use these to make tall towers or even to build a small fort.

Make an easel. If you have simple carpentry skills, build an easel for toddlers to use for art work. Cut out two rectangular pieces of plywood. Nail two 2 by 4's approximately 40" long to the back of each piece of plywood to form legs. Then attach the two pieces of plywood together with door hinges so the easel opens to produce an A shape. It can then be folded for storage. Add a safety chain to the sides. Attach a rain trough or other tray to hold the jars of paint.

Make some gross motor target games. Draw a large target on a piece of paper and tape it to a wall or door. (Be sure to hang it low to the floor). Encourage the toddlers to throw a pom or soft nerf ball as hard as they can at the target.

The toddlers can stack the milk carton blocks you made earlier and throw balls at them like a simple bowling game.

Use several large plastic ice cream pails to form targets. Encourage the toddlers to use their whole arm to throw the bean bags or pom poms at the buckets.

Do a bubble chase. Make a mixture of 1/3 liquid dish soap and 2/3 water or purchase inexpensive bubble mixture.

There are several ways for the toddlers to enjoy bubbles.

- Have an older child blow the bubbles high into the air. Encourage the toddlers to reach up high with their arms to chase and to pop the bubbles.
- Pour the bubble mix into a wide, flat dish. Cut different lengths of string and tie the ends together. Toddlers can dip the strings into the bubble mix and then run with the strings to make bubbles. Encourage toddlers to use their whole arms to raise the string up high as they run.
- Cut out shapes in a plastic coffee can lid. Dip the lid into the bubbles and ask the toddlers to blow out the bubbles.

Evaluate the Activities

List the new activities you tried with the toddlers in your care to enhance their physical development.

Activity	How did the toddler react?	Changes you would make if you did the activity again
Water painting		
Water in dishpan		
Stacking blocks		
Homemade easel		
Free art cupboard		
Collage collection		
Oatmeal drum		
Shacker boxes		
String guitars		
Homemade gym		
Box vehicles		
Target games		
Bubble chase		

3 Physical Development of Preschool Children

Preschool children have enough body control to run, jump, climb, and stop on command. They strive for opportunities to use these new-found skills.

Try to provide activities in large areas, both indoors and outdoors, that give preschoolers a chance to use different large muscles. Encourage them to climb, hang, and swing using their arms. This will aid in developing upper arm strength.

Preschoolers still will find maintaining body balance a challenge at times. Young preschool children may still have trouble walking along a strip of tape on the floor. Their leg strength and eye/foot coordination also needs to develop. Some children will need help hopping on one or even two feet, especially if they close their eyes.

Preschool children need repeated opportunities to work on small muscle development tasks that increase eye/hand coordination, hand strength, and finger flexibility. Then they can master skills like cutting, using a paper punch, simple tying, and controlling writing tools. They will become more independent as they learn how to zip, snap, and button their own clothing.

If you provide care for three-, four-, and five-year-olds, you should be able to observe a great deal of growth and refinement in the children's physical development over the preschool years.

Observe the Preschool Children in Your Care

Use this checklist to help you assess the skill levels and physical abilities of your preschoolers.

Small Muscle Development	Manages skillfully	Can with effort	Will not try
Holds writing tool correctly			
Can trace around a simple object/shape			
Holds scissor correctly			
Cuts simple lines or simple objects/shapes			
Stacks small blocks or objects			
Manipulative activities (pegboards, stringing beads, ect.)			
Construction activities (tinker toys, legos, bristle blocks, ect.)			
Can do zippers			
Can do large buttons			
Can tie shoes			
Can pour			
Large Muscle Development			
Can run and stop			
Can hop on one foot			
Can hop with both feet			
Can gallop or skip			
Can climb using alternate feet			
Can hang, supporting body with hands and arms			
Demonstrates body balance			
Demonstrates rhythm			
Can ride a pedal trike			

Evaluate Your Home

Yes	No	Is there an area available for preschool aged children to use equipment that contains many small pieces without fear of younger children swallowing them?
Yes	No	Are art supplies such as crayons, pencils, washable markers, scissors, paper punches, paper, and string easily available to the preschool child?
Yes	No	Do you have a place in your home where it is alright for preschool children to do "messy activities" such as painting, using playdough, corn starch and water, etc.?
Yes	No	Do you have a room large enough for active movement by the preschool children? This could be a place to set up an obstacle course or controlled hopping games.
Yes	No	Is there a safe place outside for children to play? Is there enough room for children to run, jump, and ride trikes? Is this area fenced?
Yes	No	Is there an area with appropriate equipment that offers the preschool child a challenge and encourages them to climb and hang?

Toy List

The following toys are developmentally appropriate for preschool children. Look through your equipment and check those items that you have in your home. Do you have enough toys for the number of preschool children that you care for?

Gross Motor Toys

____Trikes, hot cycles, and other scooters
____Jungle gyms
____Sanded and painted boards and large blocks
____Wagons to pull
____Puppets
____Large trucks or cars to push
____Kites
____Simple twister or action games
____Plastic bowling set
____Bean bags, pom pom, or soft balls
____Large baskets, buckets, and other targets
____Large play blankets
____Large and small dolls and other stuffed animals
____Card table
____Large balls

Fine Motor Toys

____Construction toys (such as tinker toys, lincoln logs, and simple erector sets)
____Small snap together blocks (such as duplos, legos, building blocks, bristle blocks)
____Sewing cards and other lacing toys
____Reusable drawing paths
____Small peg boards and other equipment that requires eye hand coordination
____Dress up clothes with buttons, zipppers, snaps
____6 to 15 piece puzzles
____Doll clothes
____Small collage items
____Tape, yarn, and string
____Crayons, pencils, and washable markers
____Various types of paper
____Paint and different sizes and types of brushes
____Paper punch and staplers
____Small plastic animals
____Small vehicles
____Small play people and furniture

Try These Physical Development Activities with Your Preschoolers

Do action songs that require the children to use their muscles. Try singing "row, row, your boat" while two children sit facing each other with their arms and feet pressed against each other. Have them rock back and forth with the words of the song.

Another fun song would be "London Bridge is falling down." Two children can join hands and reach up high as the rest of the children march around and go under the bridge.

Have the children sit with their backs together and pretend to be an old rocking chair.

Have children do creative movement activities like pretending to move like a balloon loosing all its air or like a leaf falling from a tree. Maybe they can move like bacon frying in a pan or like a snowman melting in the sun.

Make a hopscotch game. Use masking tape to mark off boxes. Design your game based on the age and skill level of your children. Young three-year olds may have trouble just hopping from box to box using both feet. A five-year old may be able to use one foot only and go backwards through the boxes.

Hang soft balls, pom poms, or balloons from the ceiling by a long string. Have the children lay on their backs and try to kick the balls. This will help develop stomach muscles and eye/leg coordination.

Do balloon chases. Have the children try to keep a soft ball or a balloon afloat in the air. Have them reach up high with their arms and hands to keep the ball moving. For more challenge have them try to use their feet to keep the ball in the air. They will have to sit on the floor and use their arms to support their bodies as they move around to keep the ball moving.

Do different animal walks. Have the children bend their bodies in different ways and encourage them to try to move as a large elephant would, then as a tiny mouse, as a hopping frog, or as a slippery snake. Watch the children to see if they can use their whole body as they move.

Let the children help you cook. It can be a good way for preschool children to gain in physical development. Use an instant pudding mix and a sealable container. Have the children take turns shaking the container as hard as they can.

Pour small amounts of whipping cream into a small baby food jar. Be sure the lid is on tight, and let the children shake the jar until they make their own homemade butter.

When making cookies encourage the children to help you stir in the ingredients. Use a large wooden spoon and try to get the children to use their whole arms as they stir as hard as they can. If you make cookies that can be rolled out, have the children stand. This forces them to use the muscles in their upper arms more. (This same value for physical development also can be gained using play dough.)

Have the children n.ake up puppet stories. Make homemade puppets from paper bags or old socks. Have the children sit behind a small card table turned on its side or inside a large box with a cut-out window. Encourage the children to reach up high with the puppets. This will aid in developing upper arm strength.

Provide woodworking tools. Woodworking also aids in arm strength development as well as eye hand coordination. Locate several small hammers, some soft wood, and some large headed nails. Let the children's imagination go to decide what to create with the wood. If you find using wood and nails is too difficult for your younger children, have them try to pound golf tees into large pieces of styrofoam packaging.

Let the children rake your leaves in the fall. They can rake the leaves into a large pile in the center of the yard. (Make sure there are no hard or sharp objects in the pile). The children will love to run and jump and roll through the leaves. The children will gain arm strength as they rake the leaves, and leg strength as they run and jump.

Fly kites. Preschool children may have difficulty with "real" kites, but they can easily make their own kites from a small paper sack. Tie on a piece of string about 7 or 8 feet long and have the children run fast to keep the kite up in the air.

Make paper collages. Locate some old catalogues, magazines, used greeting cards, or calendars which have bright and colorful pictures in them. Let the children try to cut out favorite items. These can be glued onto paper for an interesting design. The children also could use the objects to make a mobile by tying string to an old stick or hanger and then adding on the cut out pictures.

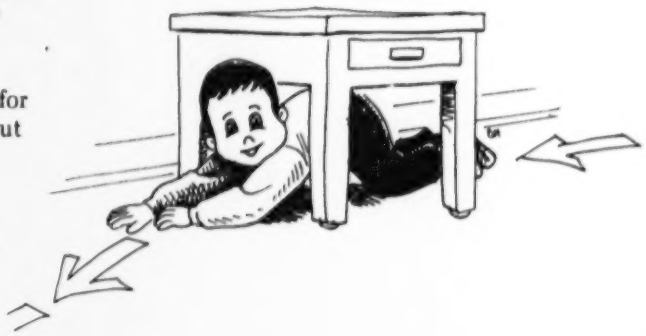
Have the children cut various shapes from paper. Then encourage them to glue the shapes together to form different vehicles, animals, or people shapes.

Make an obstacle course in your living room or family room. Start by looking around the room to see if there are items that the children could crawl under such as a small table, a piano bench, or a TV tray. Maybe the children can crawl along behind the couch.

Use masking tape to make a long line on the carpet for the children to walk heel to toe along. Make "X's" out of masking tape for the children to hop between.

If you have some well sanded boards, tape them together to make a balance beam. (The younger the children, the wider the board should be.)

Tape arrows to help all children go in the same direction through your obstacle course.



Evaluate the Activities

List the new activities you tried with the preschool aged children in your care to help foster their physical development.

Activity	How did child react?	Changes you would make if you did the activity again
Action songs		
Creative movements		
Hopscotch game		
Kick balls from ceiling		
Balloon chase		
Animal walks		
Make pudding		
Make butter		
Make cookies		
Puppet stories		
Woodworking		
Rake leaves		
Fly kites		
Paper collages		
Shape vehicles, animals or people		
Obstacle course		

4 Physical Development of School-Aged Children

By the time children reach school age, they have learned to control and coordinate both their fine and gross motor movements. Now they need to work on developing strength and endurance.

During the school months, it's important to remember that children who have been cooped up all day may need a chance to release stored up energy once school is out for the day. All this extra energy can have a negative effect on the rest of your day care children, who are probably winding down for the day.

Solve the problem by planning ahead. Have activities planned that allow the school-aged children to use up energy in a controlled, safe, and acceptable way.

School-aged children are physically larger than preschoolers, so be sure to provide more space for their activities.

Observe the School-Aged Children in Your Home

Take time to observe how the school-aged children in your care spend their time. For one or two days, carefully jot down what activites the children do from the time they arrive until their parents come to take them home.

When you have gathered this information, look at it. How much of each child's time is spent in activities that will aid in his physical development? Does the child need to become more active? Is she working on both her fine and gross motor skills?

Example

Child: Joe _____

Time arrived: 3:15 PM

Activity	Time started	Stopped	Total
Eating snack	3:20	3:35	15 min.
Watching TV	3:35	4:00	25 min.
Doing puzzle	4:00	4:15	15 min.
Riding exercise bike	4:14	4:25	10 min.
Watching TV	4:25	5:00	35 min.
Went home	5:00		

In the example, Joe was at the provider's home for one hour and 45 minutes. During that time, he spent one whole hour watching TV. Do you think he has been active enough? Joe's provider may want to limit the number of programs he watches and encourage him to play more active games such as throwing bean bags at a target or doing some animal walks. According to the example, riding the bike would aid gross motor development, while putting together the puzzle would help enhance fine motor skills.

Evaluate Your Home

Take a special tour of your home. Do you have space and equipment appropriate for school-aged children? School-aged children are physically larger than preschoolers and should not be required to sit at tables or chairs too small for them. Have you allowed a large enough space for them to play in? Many of their games and activities require more space. Can they be active without fear of breaking things? Is there a way to rearrange items to allow more play space?

You may want to set up a school-aged-only corner in your basement or in an upstairs room. This way the older children can keep certain toys and equipment safely out of the reach of the younger children. Encourage the school age children to help you design this area. They may want to bring special items from home, or together you may collect things from second hand stores or rummage sales.

List items to locate or purchase:

1. 4.
2. 5.
3. 6.

What other changes will you make?

Try These Physical Development Activities with School-Aged Children

Plan one active activity for each day. Have the children do this activity as soon as they get home in order to burn off some energy. Then provide them with a light snack and quiet time to relax and calm down.

Do running races. Have the children run or hop between pre-determined points. The children may enjoy using a stop watch to time themselves or each other. Have the children chart their best time and encourage them to try and break their own records. Try to avoid excessive competiveness among the children.

Use a small exercise trampoline. The children can take turns bouncing and guessing how high or how many hops each other can go. (Be sure to set necessary limits to insure the safety of the children.) Using the trampoline will require the child to develop body balance.

Try some indoor target games. Use rolled up socks, pom poms, or bean bags for the children to throw. Targets can be make form cardboard, small buckets, or large clothes baskets. The school-aged children will want to have a way to keep track of their scores. This activity will aid in arm strength and the child's perception skills.

Encourage the children to participate in active ball games. Even if you only care for a couple school-aged children, they can play a simple version of the ball sports. Set up a net and the children can dribble a soccer ball and try to kick in goals. Nerf balls can be batted or thrown at a fence or at targets marked on the ground.

Make up a three-hole golf course using old cans as the holes. If you don't have any old golf clubs, let the children make some by using some narrow flat scraps of wood and a couple small nails.

The children can practice throwing or kicking a football to each other. Make up a few cloth belts from some old fabric. Using velcro, attatch a flag tail. Instead of tackling each other, the children can grab off this tail.

Rig up a simple basketball hoop using an old rubber hose and some heavy tape. Try to place it on a wall without windows and in an area with solid ground underneath so the ball will bounce.

Make your own jump ropes. Find some medium weight rope and cut it into different lengths to make jump ropes. Make one quite long so that two children can twirl, while other children try to jump.

Play a game of dodge ball. Use a very soft ball. The children then can run and try to aim and then throw the ball at each other. (If the weather is nice, plan ahead and have the children bring along an extra outfit. Instead of a nerf ball, let the children throw water balloons.) If this seems too wild for your children, they can sit on the ground and roll the ball between each other's legs.

Encourage the children to try to bend their bodies different ways. They can bend over backwards to make a bridge. Some children may even be able to do a cartwheel successfully. If you care for a "tumbler" you may need to locate a soft pad for protection from falls. (You may want to limit the difficult tricks for times when you are free to "spot" for safety.)

Go outside, even in the winter. Just because it's winter does not mean children need to spend all of their time indoors. Encourage your children to build a cozy snow fort. Have them use buckets and other containers to pack snow tightly together to create snow blocks. Then they can stack the blocks in an igloo shape. A roof can be made from an old piece of plywood. Once the fort is completed, use an old carpet scrap for the floor. The children can pack a picnic lunch and eat it in the snow fort. Serve hot cocoa or any other food that is easy to pick up with mittens on such as bananas, large sandwiches, or soup in a thermos.

Make snow angels. Have the children lay on their backs in the snow and rub both arms and legs up and down as far as they can reach.

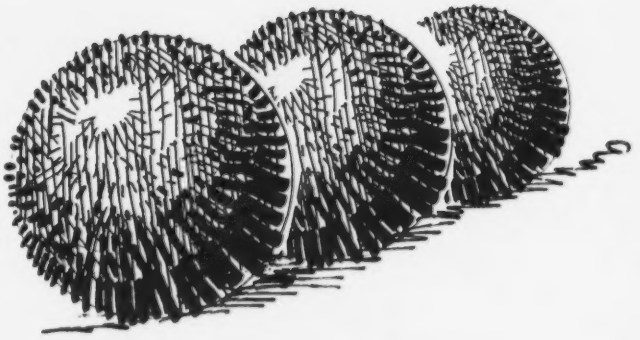
Make an ice castle. Save up large cartons of ice. Use lots of different shaped containers. Then give the children some rock salt to use to melt the ice just enough to get two pieces to stick together. The children can keep adding new walls for days.

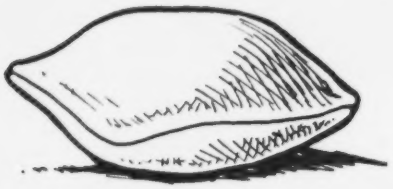
Build snowmen, or snow creatures. The school age children may be able to create a whole snow scene for your back yard.

School-aged children may enjoy making toys and equipment for the younger children

Encourage them to try making some of the following items. The school-aged children may even come up with other ideas on their own if you can help them obtain the needed supplies.

Home made pom poms. Cut a piece of cardboard 4" square. Wrap yarn around the cardboard until quite full. With care, slip the yarn off the cardboard mold and tie the center with a short piece of yarn. Make sure to tie this together tight. Then clip the ends.



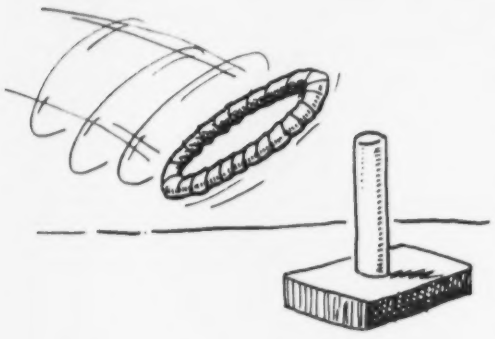


Bean bags. Cut out two 5" pieces of scrap material. Sew together with good sides facing each other. Leave a small hole for stuffing. Turn right side out and stuff with beans, popcorn, or old nylons. Stitch the opening shut.

Tracing paths. Draw out paths on construction paper. Now cover both sides of the paper with clear contact paper. Have enough border around the edges for the contact to stick together and form a seal.

Hanger bats. Bend a regular hanger into a diamond shape. Cover this wire with an old nylon sock. Tie the sock tightly together by the hoop. Use this bat with pom poms.

Ring toss game. Cut out plastic lids such that you create a ring about 1/4" thick. Tape one end of yarn to the ring and wrap clockwise until the whole ring has been covered with yarn. Loops can also be made by cutting up lengths of old hose and taping the ends together. The target can be made out of small dowels nailed to a flat piece of wood, or can be constructed out of several snap together toys.



Milk carton blocks. Carefully wash out empty milk or juice cartons. Bend over the top and tape securely down to the side to form a flat top. Cover with bright colored contact paper. Blocks can be filled with sand or other items to make the blocks different weights or to have them produce different sounds.

Evaluate the Activities

List the new activities you tried with he school-aged children in your care to help foster their physical development.

Activity	How did child react?	Changes you would make if you did the activity again
Running races		
Small trampoline		
Target games		
Active ball games		
soccer		
nerf balls		
golf course		
football		
basketball		
Jump ropes		
Dodge ball		
Body bends		
Winter fort and snow picnic		
Snow angles		
Ice castles		
Snow creatures		
Making toys annd equipment pom poms		
bean bags		
racing paths		
hanger bats		
ring toss game		
blocks		

In-Home Day Care

The attached home study guide is part of a series of three books for in-home day care providers:

- **Helping Children Develop Socially and Emotionally**
- **Helping Children Develop Physically**
- **Helping Children Develop Cognitive Skills**

An accompanying video tape is available for check out from your local Extension office. Funding for this project is provided by Child Care Services.

A newsletter series "Family Day Care Connections" is available free of charge. To receive a copy, return one of the postage paid cards in this book or write:

SDSU Extension Service
Family Day Care Connections Newsletter
Ag Hall 152, Box 2207D,
South Dakota State University
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